

Message Text

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TAGS UN, SWEL, SOCI

SUBJECT: UNICEF EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, AGENDA ITEM 3--

THE YOUNG CHILD: APPROACHES TO ACTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

(E/ICEF/L.1303 AND ADD.1)

1. SUMMARY. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ACCEPTED THE PRINCIPLES IN THE SUBJECT REPORT AND REQUESTED THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PREPARE A FINAL VERSION FOR DISTRIBUTION TO GOVERNMENTS AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS WORKING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

2. INTRODUCTION OF SUBJECT ITEM WAS MADE BY DEPUTY DIRECTOR HEYWARD WHO GAVE A SUMMARY OF THE DOCUMENT AND BY DR. CHARLES GERSHENSON WHO HAD CARRIED OUT COUNTRY AND AREA STUDIES AND PROGRAM EXAMPLE STUDIES IN 17 COUNTRIES.

3. DEL FROM INDIA PRAISED THE REPORT AND CITED EXAMPLE WHERE HIS COUNTRY HAS CARRIED OUT THE PRINCIPLES CONTAINED IN IT. DEL FROM USSR WAS CRITICAL OF THE REPORT QUESTIONING THAT IT HAD ANY VALUE, STATING THAT IT WAS A WASTE OF MONEY ESPECIALLY SINCE COUNTRY STUDIES WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE REPORT. DEL FROM GERMANY WAS FAVORABLE TOWARDS REPORT BUT ALSO REGRETTED ABSENCE OF COUNTRY STUDIES. DELS FROM SWEDEN, NORWAY, CANADA, AND UK WERE COMPLIMENTARY ABOUT REPORT BUT DECRIED ABSENCE OF MATERIAL ON THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE OF THE FATHER IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT.

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4. US DEL PRESENTED SPEECH MATERIAL CONTAINED IN SD/E/ICEF/262 STATING HAT IT WAS AN EXCELLENT REPORT. OTHER FAVORABLE COMMENTS MADE BY DELS OF FRANCE, CHILE, POLAND, INDONESIA, VENEZUELA, EGYPT, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WELFARE, WHO, FAO, UNESCO, AND THE OBSERVOR FROM CUBA.

5. RESPONSES BY MR. HEYWARD AND DR. GERSHENSON WERE MADE TO THE QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS. DR. GERSHENSON STATED THE EVIDENCE IS THAT CLOSE INVOLVEMENT OF THE FATHER IS LACKING AND IN ANY CASE ONE-THIRD OF THE FAMILIES ARE FATHERLESS. HE CITED 300 STUDIES WHICH SHOWED THE LACK OF PHYSICAL PRESENCE OF THE FATHER WAS NOT CRITICAL IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT. MR. HEYWARD SAID THAT SOME OF THE COUNTRY STUDIES ARE BEING PUBLISHED BY INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES AND THAT MODIFICATIONS OF THE REPORT WOULD BE MADE IN LINE WITH BOARD COMMENTS.

6. AT THE END OF THE DEBATE THE FOLLOWING RES WAS PASSED WITH THE EXCEPTION THAT IT BEGAN "THE EXECUTIVE BOARD APPROVES" SINCE THIS GAVE WIDE LATITUDE OF APPROVAL TO A DRAFT DOCUMENT, US DEL REQUESTED AND RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM THE CHAIRMAN TO AMEND THE RES TO THE FOLLOWING WORDING. AMENDMENT WAS ACCEPTED.

"THE EXECUTIVE BOARD ACCEPTS THE EMPHASES IN UNICEF ASSISTANCE POLICIES SET OUT IN PARAGRAPHS 252-278 OF THE DRAFT REPORT (E/ICEF/L.1303), AND IN THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF CHAPTER VIII OF THE ADDENDUM PREPARED BY THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN CENTRE (E/ICEF/L.1303/ADD.1).

"THE BOARD REQUESTS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PREPARE THE REVISED VERSION OF THE REPORT, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE COMMENTS OF BOARD MEMBERS, SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER KNOWLEDGEABLE PERSONS. THE FINAL VERSION SHOULD THEN BE REPRODUCED FOR DISTRIBUTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BOTH IN AND OUTSIDE OF GOVERNMENT, AND TO ORGANIZATIONS AND PERSONS CONCERNED WITH EXTERNAL AID AND WITH INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMMES AND SOCIAL ISSUES."

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